

It was frequently seen during the day but was more abundant at night, and appeared to occur in three strikingly different colour patterns:—

- (i) The commonest was dark above, very similar to *R. leithii*.
- (ii) A less frequent pattern was paler with dark patches behind the eyes (similar to breeding specimens from North Kanara).
- (iii) A relatively rare colour pattern was dark brown or almost black above, with a white vertebral streak extending from the snout to the posterior end of the body. There was often a small white square blotch on the top of the head.

None of these colour-patterns were restricted to one sex, and all the frogs had varying shades of reddish-orange on the underside; above and below the knee joint this colour was, however, not noticed in the specimens from North Kanara). No specimens larger than 40 mm. from snout to vent were obtained. The gonads were quiescent and the males had neither of the two secondary sexual characters noted in Londa specimens.

The stomach held remains of insects including Gryllids (*Oecanthus* sp.), Reduvid Bugs and Carabid beetles. One stomach held the mangled remains of a *Philautus*, probably *P. bombayensis*.

The same streams in which these frogs were found held numbers of *Nyctibatrachus humayuni*, and *Rana temporalis*, as also the tadpoles of the former. Chari and Daniel have already expressed the opinion (JBNHS, 51: 514) that Annandale's record of tadpoles of *R. beddomii* from Khandala (*Rec. Ind. Mus.*, xx, p. 116) must be in error for *leithii*.

On 23rd July 1953, H.A. took a solitary tadpole in a shallow sandy-bottomed hill-stream facing the Lingmala Falls at Mahableshwar, which Dr. J. L. Bhaduri, who kindly examined it, cannot distinguish from the tadpole of *R. leithii*. McCann (JBNHS, 46: 405) records *Rana leithii* from the same area, but attention has already been drawn (JBNHS, 52: 635) to his mistaking a *beddomii* from Gersoppa for this species. We have visited both Panchgani and Mahableshwar on several occasions and the abundance in which we found the adults of *leithii* at Panchgani and of *beddomii* at Mahableshwar, coupled with our failure to find the former at Mahableshwar and the latter at Panchgani, inclines us to believe that the two species do not occur together in the same localities (i.e. they are allopatric), and to suggest that it is perhaps not possible readily to differentiate between their tadpoles. Further work is, however, necessary before this can be asserted conclusively.

BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,
December 15, 1954.

HUMAYUN ABDULALI
J. C. DANIEL

21. PRESUMPTIVE EATING OF A KRAIT BY SCORPIONS

In an attempt to study the effects of different insecticides upon scorpions a considerable number were collected and kept in cages, two in each. A 7-in. krait, *Bungarus caeruleus*, was placed in one

such cage and the following morning found missing, though the cage was closed and there was no possibility of escape.

Both the scorpions were dissected for an examination of their digestive tracts, and pieces of some hard and soft material (vertebrae and skin) were found in their guts, especially in the stomach and rectum. This appears to be good evidence of a poisonous snake being eaten by a scorpion *Buthus* sp.

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY,
JASWANT COLLEGE, JODHPUR,
August 31, 1954.

ISHWAR PRAKASH
K. C. DAVE

22. A GRATEFUL SKINK

About 6.30 p.m. on the evening of 21st September, as I walked through my garden, I noticed a Skink (*Mabuya* sp.—subsequently measured to be $10\frac{1}{2}$ ins. long) feebly trying to clamber out of a half-filled water tank. She was almost at her last gasp.

I lowered my open right palm into the water close to her. She gratefully struggled on to it, and keeping my hand spread open, I gently lifted her out of the water. She was cold, heavy and sodden, and from time to time she brought up small quantities of water that she must have swallowed in her struggles. I did not touch her with my other hand, but left her to recover through the warmth of the palm on which she lay, head on my wrist and long tail tapering away beyond my finger-tips.

I walked all round the garden, giving instructions to my Malis, and as darkness came on I went indoors and sat in my large warm kitchen. All this time the Skink never moved, though I could feel her growing drier, warmer and lighter, and almost see the sparkle come back into her bright little eyes. Presently her tongue began to flick in and out, and she slowly moved a couple of inches higher up my wrist. I kept my hand open as from the first, but freely tilted it and freely raised and lowered my whole arm.

At 8.30 I called for my supper, which I had to eat left-handed.

At 9.0 I began to stroke my guest, gently but firmly, along her back. Still she made no movement, although by now obviously fully recovered, except to lick my finger when I placed it close to her mouth.

At 9.15 I carried her upstairs to my sitting-room and gently forced her off my hand into a piece of hollow bamboo, which she made her headquarters for the next few days. When I next saw her, she scuttled away from me in the normal fashion.

I do not know whether such fearless and trustful reaction on the part of reptiles is of frequent occurrence. In my own experience it is unique, although the snakes which I handle always lie passively in my hands until I set them down at what my daughters consider a 'safe' distance from the house.

LONAVLA,
September 29, 1954.

T. GAY